

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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R 220626Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7787

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PK, CH, PINT, PBOR, PDEV

SUBJECT: PRC VICE PREMIER VISIT ENDS ON PLAIN OF HIGH RHETORIC

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 5407, B) ISLAMABAD 5685

1. SUMMARY: A DELEGATION OF APPROXIMATELY FORTY PRC OFFICIALS
HEADED BY VICE PREMIER KENG PIAO DEPARTED PAKISTAN JUNE 21 AFTER
A FIVE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT OF UNPRECEDENTED WARMTH AND PUBLIC
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RELATIONS ACTIVITY. THE VISIT WAS HIGHLIGHTED BY KENG'S JOINING
CMLA GEN. ZIA IN OFFICIALLY OPENING PRC SPONSORED KARAKORAM
HIGHWAY. KENG ALSO VISITED TARBELA DAM AND WAS FETED IN KARACHI
BY PAKISTAN NAVY, WHICH IS PARTIALLY EQUIPPED BY PRC. DESPITE THE
RANK OF THE VISITOR, LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE WAS APPARENTLY ACHIEVED
DURING HIS TALKS WITH PAKISTANI LEADERS. HOWEVER, THE VISIT'S
HIGH PROFILE AND THE WARMTH OF THE RELATIONSHIP WHICH IT REFLECTS

SERVE AS NEEDED TONIC FOR A PAKISTAN BESET WITH ANXIETIES ABOUT EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND UNCERTAINTY ABOUT ITS FUTURE POLITICAL COURSE. END SUMMARY.

2. CHINESE VICE PREMIER KENG PIAO AND HIS WIFE, CHAO LAN-SIANG, LED A LARGE DELEGATION OF NEARLY 40 OFFICIALS, DIPLOMATS, AND TECHNICIANS INTO ISLAMABAD'S FLAG BE-DECKED INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON JUNE 16 TO BEGIN A FIVE-DAY VISIT. FOCUS WAS INITIALLY ON THE OPENING OF THE 500-MILE KARAKORAM HIGHWAY CONNECTING THE CHINESE BORDER WITH ABBOTABAD, BUT VISIT IN MOST RESPECTS WAS A FORMIDABLE PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORT TO EMPHASIZE THE WARMTH AND CLOSENESS OF SINO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS. AS A SOVIET DIPLOMAT COMMENTED TO POLCOUNS ON JUNE 20, CHINESE TIMING COULD NOT HAVE BEEN BETTER IN TERMS OF BOOSTING PAKISTANI MORALE AND ASSUAGING PAKISTANI ANXIETIES ABOUT RECENT EVENTS IN THE REGION AND UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT ITS OWN FUTURE.

3. THE CHOICE OF KENG TO HEAD THE DELEGATION WAS ALSO APT; HE AND HIS WIFE WERE IN PAKISTAN FROM 1956 TO 1959 WHEN HE SERVED HERE AS CHINESE AMBASSADOR.

4. PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THE PRC DELEGATION HELD AT LEAST TWO LENGTHY SESSIONS WITH GOP LEADERS ON JUNE 16 AND 19, BUT NO INDICATION OF WHAT WAS DISCUSSED HAS BEEN FORTHCOMING. ONE WELL-INFORMED NEWSMAN SPECULATED TO POLCOUNS THAT PRC SUPPLY OF ADDITIONAL ARMS TO GOP WAS A MOST LIKELY SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BUT THAT HE COULD NOT CONFIRM. SAME SOURCE REPORTED CHINESE WERE SURPRISED WHEN GEN. ZIA DID NOT DISCUSS ARMS DURING HIS DECEMBER 1977 PEKING VISIT. FRENCH EMBASSY COLLEAGUE TOLD EMBOFF THAT RESPECTED LOCAL JOURNALIST DISCOVERED (BUT DID NOT PUBLISH) THAT JUNE 16 SESSION DEVOTED TO DISCUSSION INTERNAL PAK SITUATION. JOURNALIST FELT STRONGLY THAT ANOTHER APPEAL FOR BHUTTO'S LIFE WAS INCLUDED.

5. HYPERBOLE SURROUNDING JUNE 18 OPENING OF KARAKORAM HIGHWAY FROM PRC BORDER DEEP INTO PAKISTAN WAS PREDICTABLE IN ASSURING PAK/PRC RELATIONS ARE AT HIGHEST POSSIBLE PEAK. GENERAL ZIA SPOKE GLOWINGLY OF THE IDENTITY OF VIEWS HELD ON BOTH REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS BY THE TWO FRATERNAL COUNTRIES.

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6. KENG RECIPROCATED ON JUNE 20 IN KARACHI CIVIC RECEPTION WHEN HE ASSURED PAKISTAN OF CONTINUING PRC SUPPORT OF PAK POSITION ON "SELF-DETERMINATION" FOR JAMMU AND KASHMIR. KENG PROCEEDED TO DEVELOP THEME THAT GREATEST THREAT TO REGION IS "IMPERIALISM AND HEGEMONISM," WHICH PAKS WILL READ "THE USSR AND INDIA." PRC WILL ASSIST PAKISTAN IN RESISTING BOTH, KENG PLEDGED. THE VICE PREMIER PROMISED "UNSWERVING SUPPORT TO THE GOP IN STRUGGLE TO SAFEGUARD NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND STATE SOVEREIGNTY AGAINST FOREIGN INTERFERENCE AND SUBVERSION."

7. KENG HOSTED TO LUNCHEON JUNE 20 BY PAK NAVY WHERE HE EXPRESSED
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THE HOPE MORE PAK NAVAL OFFICERS COULD SOON VISIT THE PRCE. PAK NAVY COMMANDER RESPONDED WITH THANKS TO PRC FOR SUPPLY OF NAVAL CRAFT PRESENTLY EMPLOYED IN DEFENSE OF PAKISTAN'S WATERS. INTERESTING TO NOTE GEN. ZIA TRAVELED TO KARACHI FOR PERIOD OF VISITOR'S STAY THAT CITY.

8. INDICATIONS ARE THAT KENG LEFT BEHIND APPROXIMATELY HALF OF DELEGATION. THOSE STAYING APPARENTLY WILL CARRY ON DISCUSSIONS

WITH GOP ON FURTHER TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECTS. NO DETAILS OF SUCH TALKS HAVE BEEN MADE PUBLIC.

9. COMMENT: THE PRESS HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF THE PAUCITY OF HARD INFORMATION ABOUT THE VISIT, AND THE EMBASSY'S GOP CONTACTS HAVE BEEN EQUALLY UNFORTHCOMING IN RELATING ANY SUBSTANCE OF KENG VISIT -- PERHAPS BECAUSE LITTLE OR NONE EXISTS OR BECAUSE SENSITIVE SUBJECTS DISCUSSED IN GROUPS LIMITED TO PRINCIPALS. IT SEEMS EVIDENT HERE, HOWEVER, THAT KENG VISIT DESIGNED TO BOLSTER MORALE OF PAKS IN LIGHT OF AFGHAN EVENTS, AND IN THIS IT HAS BEEN QUITE SUCCESSFUL. PARALLEL VISIT BY PRC FONMIN TO IRAN WOULD APPEAR PART OF SAME ANTI-SOVIET EXERCISE. KENG ADDRESS OF JUNE 20 ASSURING PAKS OF SUPPORT FOR TERRITORIAL CLAIMS IN KASHMIR AND IN RESISTANCE TO "REGIONAL HEGEMONY" ALSO SEEMS OVERT SIGNAL REMINDING SOVIETS (AND INDIANS) OF VESTED PRC INTERESTS HERE.
HUMMEL

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